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ABSTRACT

This project includes an assortment of artifacts designed to inform high school students about the variety of geographical and cultural regions of Mexico. The artifacts, derived from seven different geographical/cultural regions of Mexico, include maps, posters, objects that symbolize the regional culture, and typical regional costumes, music, and folk dance. It recommends a maximum of three to five regions be presented at one time to avoid overwhelming the students. The project can be used in high school Spanish, world or global studies or contemporary issues, or English as a second language classes. The use of cultural artifacts, music, and dance allows students to absorb the information in left and right brain manners (linear and symbolic). The project can be presented in an assembly or in one or more classroom presentations. The unit outline provides presentation information (with key questions and queries) and background notes; addresses Oregon state standards for social studies; cites objectives; lists materials and artifacts to be presented; gives teaching strategies; discusses assessment/evaluation; suggests follow-up activities; and lists additional resources and references. (BT)

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FULLBRIGHT-HAYES CURRICULUM PROJECT

TITLE: Many Mexicos: an artifact exhibit on 7 geographical and cultural regions of Mexico

AUTHOR: By Victoria Snow Mountain, ESL Teacher, South Medford High School
Medford, Oregon

GRADE LEVEL: Designed for high school, may be adapted to lower levels.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

This project includes an assortment of artifacts designed to teach students about the variety of geographical and cultural regions of Mexico. The artifacts are derived from seven geographical/cultural regions of Mexico. The artifacts include maps, posters, objects that symbolize the regional culture, and typical regional costumes, music, and folkdance. For the purpose of presenting this material, it is recommended that a maximum of three to five regions be presented at one time to avoid overwhelming the student.

The purpose of the project is to introduce to the student in very tangible ways that Mexico is made up of a rich variety of geographical and cultural regions, thus the title "Many Mexicos". The project is intended to provide the student with a deeper understanding of the variety of geographical and cultural regions in Mexico and to address common stereotypes or generalizations students may have about the land and people of Mexico. This project could be useful for high school classes such as Spanish, World or Global Studies or Contemporary Issues. It could also be useful for ESL classes as the project author has noted that even many Latino, Mexican, or Mexican-American ESL students seem to know very little about regions of Mexico other than their own family's ancestral area.

The use of cultural artifacts, music, and dance will allow the student to absorb the information in both left and right brain manners (linear and symbolic). The student will also utilize a variety of learning styles including auditory, visual, and kinesthetic, while participating in this presentation.

The project may be presented in one session or in a series of sessions. It could be presented in the form of an assembly for a large group of students. In this case, the maps, posters, and artifacts would be presented via transparencies projected on a large screen and the costume introduction and dance segments could be performed with live dancers or presented via video.

The project may also be presented in the form of one or more classroom presentations. In this case the maps, posters,and artifacts could be passed around the class. The costumes would be modeled by students and the music and dance portions either performed life or presented as videos.

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The Presentation consists of :

1. Geography: Introduction of maps and posters to identify the location, topography, and climate of the state.
2. Culture: Presentation of the state regional costume, modeled by a student, and sharing of artifacts representing the culture of that region.
3. Cultural Presentation: recorded music, then dance presentation, either live or from video to further illustrate regional clture.

KEY QUESTIONS AND QUERIES:

How are different parts of the Mexican Republic the same and different from one another?
What different geographical regions can be found in Mexico?
What are the types of climate in each?
What are the main agricultural products produced in each?
What is the ethnic or cultural background of the people most representative of each region?
What are some symbols of the culture of each region?
What is a typical traditional costume for each region?
What is the typical traditional music?
What does a traditional dance look like?

BACKGROUND NOTES

As well as teaching English Second Language to mainly Mexican high school students, the author of this presentation has organized and directed a student Mexican folkdance group, called Ballet Folklorico Latin Reflection, for 10 years. The Fullbright Seminar to Mexico of 2002 was a golden opportunity for her to see first hand a variety of Mexican regions, to explore their geography, meet local people, and collect artifacts of all kinds. This information is being shared with both the school's ESL (mainly Mexican) students and the mainstream population as well.

For the non-Mexican student, the information serves to introduce them to the concept that the Mexican Republic contains a wealth of regional geographies and cultures whose variety, liveliness, color, flavor, and rhythm go far beyond the stale stereotypes so often taught in our schools in the past.

For the Mexican students, the information is a figurative letter from home, a message reminding the students of the many reasons they have reason to be proud of their rich heritage. It is to those students, many of whom come from the regions here represented, that this project is dedicated.

STANDARDS

This project speaks directly to a number of the Oregon Standards for Social Studies, including map reading, understanding elements of physical geography, identifying cultural values and practices, and understanding and respecting diversity.

OBJECTIVES

After viewing this presentation, the student will be able to:

1.Name 5 geographical regions of Mexico
2. Locate each on a map of Mexico
3. Identify the topography and climate for each.
4. List one or more agricultural, mineral or industrial product for each.
5. Explain the ethnic background of the traditional inhabitants of each
6. Identify from which region a given piece of music and dance originates.

MATERIALS & ARTIFACTS

1. Nuevo Leon- Northern Desert Region

Maps- Location map, State map

Posters

Nuevo Leon Dept Tourism- capital at Monterrey
Pancho Villa

Costumes

girl- blouse, skirt, petticoat, sash, shoes
braid, hair ribbons
boy- cowboy shirt, pants, bandana, cowboy hat, boots

Cultural artifacts

girls dance boots
cowboy hat
serape

Music-cassette- Polkas Norteñas- from Casa Folklorica (see resources)

Video- Nuevo Leon set from Ballet Folklorico de La Universidad de Vera Cruz

2.Sinaloa- Pacific Coast Tropical Region

Maps-location map, state map
Posters- Mazatlan, other views of Sinaloa- from State Board of Tourism
Artifacts- ceramic plate, coconut hanging fish , fans, hammock
Costumes- girl- blouse, skirt, hat, beads, shoes

boy- colored cotton shirt, white pants, boots, straw hat
Music-cassette- Sinaloa- from Casa Folklorica (see resources)

Video- Sinaloa set- Ballet Folklorico Xochitl, Portland, Oregon

3. Oaxaca- Southern Region
Maps- Location map, State map

Posters- La Guelaguetza, Monte Alban, Regions of Oaxaca

Artifacts- doll from theTehuantepec Region
doll from the Tuxtepec Region
black pottery

Costumes- Tuxtepec- girl- huipil, skirt, braids, ribbons, pineapple
Tehuantepec- girl- embroidered blouse and skirt, dance shoes, white head dress, gold earrings, necklace and bracelets, basket with paper flags

Music- cassettes Musica de Oaxaca- Guelaguetza en Vivo
See www.guelaguetza.com.mx

Video- La Guelaguetza Didactica

From videosanba@yahoo.com.mx

4. Vera Cruz- Gulf/Carribean Coast- Tropical Region
Maps- Location map, State map

Posters- Olmec Head- Museum of Anthropology, Jalapa, Vera Cruz

Artifacts- doll in Vera Cruz costume
dance fan, hair comb, earrings
wooden boat
Costume- girl- white blouse, shawl, petticoat, skirt, black apron, flowered hair piece, earrings, necklace, fan, white dance shoes
Boy- white Guayabera shirt, white pants, white boots, red bandana around neck, white hat
Music- CD- Vera Cruz Hermoso- conjunto Jarocho Medellin

Video- Vera Cruz set- Ballet Folklorico de Mexico- Amalia Hernandez
www.balletamelia.com.mx

5. Michoacan- Central- typical agricultural Region
Maps- Location mapa, State map, Cultural regions map

Posters- Morelia, Uruapan, Traditional Costume Contest

Artifacts- wooden mask for "los Viejitos" dance
pottery replica of an ancient oil lamp from Tzinzunzan, Mich
dolls representing "Los Viejitos" and Las Juaninas
dances of the old men and women
Costume- girl- embroidered blouse, skirt, apron, hat, brainds, shawl
boy- white shirt, pants, serape, huaraches, mask, hat, cane
Music- CD- Los Viejitos de Jaracuaro- Danza Tradicional de Michoacan

Video- Michoacan set- Ballet Folklorico de la Universidad de Guadalajara, vol.1

6. Jalisco- Central-
Maps-Location map, State map
Posters- views of Guadalajara and the state- State Board of tourism

Artifacts- serape
elaborately decorated charro hat
men's dance boots
Costume- girl- ribbon trimmed blouse, skirt, hair piece, necklaces, shoes
boy- gold trimmed Charro suit, hat, tie, sash, boots

Music- CD Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan

Video- Jalisco set- Ballet Folklorico de la Universidad de Guadalajara
Vol 1 or 2

7. Mexico City- Ancient Aztec Capital
Maps- Location map, Tenochtitlan, Modern Mexico City
Posters- Aztec Calendar, Aztec Math, Museum of Anthropology, DF

Artifacts- goard rattles
ankle rattles
rain stick
hand drum
incense burner and copal (incense)
feather head dress

Costumes- girl- huipil, skirt, ankle rattles, headband, bracelets, rattle

Music- CD- White Eagle, Calif.

Video- Aztec set- Ballet Folklorico de la Universidad de Guadalajar, vol 1

STRATEGIES

CLASSROOM- Present as the beginning or culmination of a unit of study. Or, present over a period of time as part of the main content of the unit.

ASSEMBLY- One time presentation of 3 to 7 regions.

PRINTED MATERIALS

STUDENT PRE-PRESENTATION QUESTIONAIRE

STUDENT NOTE SHEET

STUDENT RESPONSE SHEET

ASSESSMENT / EVALUATION

Have students fill out Pre-program questionaire before viewing presentation. Then have students fill out student response sheet afterwards to gage student learning and response to the material delivered.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

This presentation may be used in a variety of ways. A teacher or group of classes may use this as an introductory event for a unit on Mexico or Latin America, or it could serve as a culminating activity for such a unit of study. The presentation could also be used as a way of celebrating Mexico at the time of a Mexican holiday such as:

Cinco de Mayo (May 5th) Celebration of the Battle of Puebla, the defeat of the French Occupation- 1864

Mexican Independence Day (Sept. 16th)- Cry of Independence from Spain- 1811

Dia de La Raza (Oct.12) Celebrating the formation of the Mestizo Race (Indiginous Americans with Europeans) with the coming of Columbus

Day of the Revolution (Nov.20)- beginning of the Mexican Revolution- 1910

or during Hispanic Heritage month (Sept. 15- Oct.15) celebrated in the USA

*If students of Mexican origin are among the student body, they might be asked to bring in current popular music from Mexico and perhaps even to demonstrate dance steps from their favorite contemporary music.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & REFERENCES

ORGANIZATIONS:

Danzantes Unidos (annual dance conference, videos, regional folklore books)
Consulado Mexicano (Can provide Mexican Text books and video for schools)
Check in your state capital or large cities or contact:
Consulado Mexicano- Portland, Oregon Fax- 503-274-1540

BALLET FOLKLORICO GROUPS:

Ballet Folklorico de Mexico de Amalia Hernandez- www.balletamelia.com.mx

Ballet Folklorico de la Universidad de Guadalajara-

Ballet Folklorico Magisterial (Nuevo Leon)- b-f-magisterial21@hotmail.com

David Rojas' group- www.folklorico.com /folk-dances/

MUSIC:

Columbia House/ Club Music Latina- www.Columbia House.com

BOOKS:

Aguirre Cristiani, Gabriela and Segura Escalona, Felipe, El Ballet Folklorico de Mexico de Amalia Hernandez, Fomento Cultural Banamex, AC, Mexico DF, Mexico, 1994. ISBN 9687009-44-6

Nuñez Mesta, Martin Antonio et al, Bailes del Folklor Mexicano, Editorial Trillas, Mexico DF, Mexico, 1990. ISBN 68-24-3252-9

BOOK STORES:

Librerias el Sotano- www.elsotano.com

Librerias Gandhi (also have a music store)- www.gandhi.com.mx

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